

HAURAKI- COROMANDEL RECREATIONAL BIKING STRATEGY

**A strategic approach to creating a nationally-significant
mountain bike destination in Hauraki Coromandel**



*Prepared for: Thames-Coromandel District Council
by Ally Davey, September 2023*

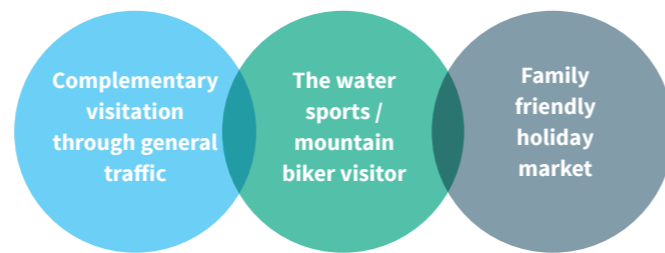
WE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT OUR PLACE

We are passionate about our place, The Coromandel and we are even more passionate about trails in this magnificent destination. Our belief is that a world-class network of trails and cycling experiences will enhance our quality of living and well-being within our communities, grow the region's economy and entice visitors from around the world to enjoy The Coromandel's natural beauty.

Over the twelve months prior to June 2021, almost 2.19 million trips were taken across the New Zealand Cycle Trail Rides network, with an estimated health benefit of \$11 million resulting from cycle trail use, improved well-being, fitness and reconnection to the natural environment. More than \$950 million was contributed directly to regions as a result of cycle trail users.*

The existing Hauraki Rail Trail and a strategic approach to connecting the visitor experience to this trail require further investigation. This is an important tourist opportunity and should be at the front of mind when considering the regional growth. However this proposal considers other trail personas and adventure trail riders alongside key towns that are currently not directly adjacent to the Hauraki Rail Trail, but may be complimentary via backcountry trails, offering additional places to visit, ride or experience when visiting or living in the Hauraki Coromandel region.

The value of the coastal location of The Coromandel trails to local recreationalists and visitors should not be underestimated. This attribute provides additional market opportunities:



The complementary visitor market is a large visitor opportunity, as these visitors are a captive audience, already in the area. Catering to this market will require world-class beginner trails, safe access from urban hubs and excellent commercial servicing providing hire bikes, tours and related products.

The water sports / ride holiday market is smaller, yet very important given product availability in the current market. There are very few opportunities in the southern hemisphere to ride world-class, official mountain bike trails and to surf, fish or dive within the same immediate area. The Coromandel offers both of these experiences and this makes it an attractive proposition for visitors seeking to combine events.

Over the last five years the mountain bike sport image has shifted from extreme to a more encompassing adventure sport, bringing with it increased participation from beginner riders, families, children and females of all ages. The increase in accessibility via e bikes has reimaged riding from a wide perspective of participants.

* See page 23 for references



In 2021 the average Great Rides visitor expenditure was calculated at \$892.20 per visitor and an 18 per cent increase in visitor nights year on year*. The family-friendly riding holiday market is rapidly growing, with a growing female and youth rider market driving a strong interest in mountain bike family holidays. The Coromandel is very well-positioned to capitalise on this market.

The mountain bike industry has seen exponential growth that has accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost 1,600 businesses across the Great Rides of New Zealand network provide more than 1,000 accommodation services and nearly 800 food and beverage outlets. A further 350 businesses benefit from the packaging and promotion of their own products to trail users.*

While the Great Ride Data gives an overview and accountable, reliable data, the region's existing bike parks and trails do not currently have access to user data as readily available as Great Ride Data. However a recent regional survey of local bike events (Whangamatā and Coromandel) calculated that 20 percent of event attendees spent over \$300 per day on expenses and more than \$300 per night on accommodation with an average stay of more than three days.

So it is likely that the estimated \$900 spend per rider per visit is within acceptable estimates in order to calculate estimated rider spend.

Further economic research was undertaken in May 2023 by leading economist Benje Patterson. In New Zealand's production forests, the economic impact of trail development is also evident. These forests generated \$291 million in income in 2022, with expectations of further growth to \$318 million in 2027. Approximately 600,000 riders currently enjoy these trails, with an estimated \$1.3 million in mental health benefits attributed to their use. Rotorua, known for its biking opportunities, boasts an annual income of \$111 million from riders. Events like Crankworks contribute an additional \$5 million to the region's economy.

** See page 29 for references

In Coromandel, there was a remarkable 47% increase in spending by production forest riders in 2022, amounting to \$8.4 million, with expectations of continued growth to \$9.2 million by 2027.

The development of trails in Bentonville, USA, has had a substantial economic impact and delivered a significant return on investment. These trails, spanning 260 kilometres, were initiated by the Walton Family Foundation with a 10-year investment totalling \$74 million. In return, they have attracted out-of-region visitors, generating \$27 million in revenue, and contributed to a \$51 million business benefit. The trails have witnessed remarkable growth, with the number of rides in the region increasing from 862,000 in 2019 to 1.5 million in 2020. Furthermore, the trails have contributed to the region's health, with an estimated \$86 million in total healthcare benefits, including \$7 million in avoided healthcare costs. Additionally, the proximity to the trail network has increased housing values, with one-third of residents considering bike infrastructure an essential factor in their decision to live in the area.

In a recent report* from the Southern Eco Trails Trust (Kevin Jennings), the importance of regional Local Trail Entities (LTEs) and the formation of a national advocacy body was reiterated to "align and enable an approach to embracing trails for both active transport and recreation". This will improve the way we move within our communities, decrease our carbon emissions and result in improved mental and physical health for our people. It will also create further tourism benefits including an opportunity to activate regenerative tourism initiatives.

This framework works toward creating a regionally significant, collaborative, sustainable cycling destination and provides a set of ideas and actions to initiate change within cycling in the region.

ORIGIN/BACKGROUND

In 2018 an initial tracks and trails forum was hosted by Thames Coromandel District Council (TCDC) with a view to understand the community need for trails in the region. As a result of the 2020 forum the Coromandel Trails Collective was formed with the objective to enable community-based groups to create, facilitate and maintain high quality community regional track and trail recreational assets to meet the needs of our communities, locals, visitors and environment.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to stimulate and facilitate collaboration by enabling positive outcomes with key stakeholders and partners to achieve these goals, using the following agenda:

- i) **Decide and confirm the agreed (off-road) cycle-based regional goals and objectives for the next ten years with the development of a master trails plan and regional trail management.**
- ii) **Define what the priorities are and who will lead each initiative.**
- iii) **Define what resources will be needed, how this will be facilitated and who will work together.**
- iv) **Understand the timeline for the next ten years and what the milestones and outcomes will be.**

Once completed, this framework will be used to support requests for funding and an implementation plan undertaken with stakeholders to ensure the project deliverables and progress is achieved within acceptable time frames.

SCOPE

This proposed framework is considering off-road, recreational cycle trails and family-orientated bike recreation throughout the Hauraki Coromandel region. Commuter transport routes and safe cycling pathways are not included in this scope, but are considered to be integral in the planning and long-term access and sustainability of cycling in the region. They require an integrated, strategic alignment in order to facilitate safe access to trail heads and facilities, as well as safe links and the reduction of road capacity throughout the region, and should be aligned with council infrastructure responsibility.

It is noted there is no current Active Transportation Walking and Cycling Plan for the Thames Coromandel region.

The Hauraki Rail Trail is not included in this scope, although it is considered an important part of the region's cycle tourism, nor is this framework proposing extensions to this trail.

The Coromandel Journey of Cycle - Haerenga Pahikara

The name Haerenga Pahikara has been coined by the author as a working name, and symbolises the rider experiencing more than a bike ride as such. It is symbolic of the journey of life when one connects with The Coromandel environment. The rongo of the ngahere, the mana of the people and those before us. The pure joy that one can experience from simply riding through the bush with your eyes and ears open. Leaning in to courage when fear over takes. Cycling is not just about riding a bike, but it can be a metaphor of life, and this is what she wishes to portray and hopes for riders to experience on their own cycle journey.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESULTS

With a view to creating a regional, collaborative approach to natural surface track and trail development across the Hauraki-Coromandel Region. Community feedback on the Draft Biking Strategy community engagement was sought by Thames-Coromandel District Council in August 2023.

The community survey received 564 responses, with the vast majority of respondents supportive of the draft Strategy's overall goals.

KEY THEMES IN THE FEEDBACK WERE:

ACCESSIBILITY AND AMENITIES

Include fit-for-purpose trail head infrastructure including carparking, toilets, bicycle maintenance stations and secure bike racks at appropriate locations to enhance the biking experience.

COUNCIL SUPPORT

Actively support biking initiatives with a focus on recreational cyclists and promote longer, less challenging routes to attract a broader audience.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Collaborate with local experts, cycling enthusiasts, and residents to ensure the biking projects align with community needs and preferences.

CREATE A COMPREHENSIVE BIKING NETWORK

Develop a long-term plan to connect the entire Coromandel Peninsula with biking trails, catering to various skill levels and interests.

DIVERSIFY TRAIL TYPES

Ensure the strategy includes a mix of trail types, catering to a wide range of cyclists, from families to avid mountain bikers. Focus on off-road touring trails that are scenic and accessible.

DEDICATED CYCLEWAYS

Prioritise the development of safe cycleways to popular biking destinations, addressing safety concerns for residents and tourists alike.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Promote a green ethos among businesses along the trails. Consider partnerships with local businesses to create bike-friendly services. Leverage the economic potential of cycling tourism for the region.

FUNDING MODELS

Explore funding models that do not overly burden local ratepayers. Consider user-pays models for sustainability without excluding potential visitors.

INCLUSIVE BIKING INITIATIVES

Ensure that biking projects offer options for riders of all abilities, promoting inclusivity and community engagement.

PRESERVE EXISTING TRAILS

When considering concept planning of bike trails, conduct thorough impact and environmental assessments and seek local input to ensure the preservation of natural environments and user experiences.

Consider the recycling of existing trails to support increased walking access as well as bike trails.

SAFE ACCESS TO TRAILS

Prioritise the development of safe routes from towns to trailheads, ensuring the safety of cyclists, especially children. Collaborate with local communities to address access concerns.

SHORT-TERM GOALS

Develop a more aggressive timeline with annual goals for trail expansion and promotion.

STREAMLINED APPROVALS

Expedite the paperwork and approvals process to minimize delays and ensure timely project execution.

TRANSPARENCY AND COLLABORATION

Engage with local communities, Iwi, hapū, and Māori stakeholders in the planning and implementation of biking initiatives to ensure inclusivity and cultural sensitivity.

PROMOTION

Launch a comprehensive marketing and promotion campaign to raise awareness of the Coromandel's cycling trails. Highlight the region's unique attractions and experiences for cyclists.

See Appendix A for the Infographic Survey Result

OUR VISION

The Coromandel is explored more sustainably by connecting communities and showcasing our environment to become a nationally significant mountain bike destination by 2032.

OUR KEY PILLARS

PEOPLE

Improve the health and well-being of our communities and visitors by ensuring healthier lifestyle options and connecting New Zealanders back to the ngahere (forest).

PLACE

Create inclusive, resilient and sustainable communities whilst safeguarding and enhancing our natural heritage, biodiversity and ecology. We connect people to places with quality experiences that attract visitors from around the country and world.

PATHWAY

Devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates employment, business opportunities, enhances our environment, promotes local heritage, culture and creativity.

Working together, we focus on biking experiences that share our unique culture, protect our special environment and give back to our supportive locals.

Collaboratively, our goal is to create a world-class trail network and experience that preserves and enhances the environment for our residents, visitors and all who experience them. We aim to increase the stewardship and value of trails and sustainably plan, deliver and resource the trail network and its ongoing development for future generations.



OUTCOMES

We would like to reach the following destination where we see these outcomes are achieved:

**40 X 4
WITHIN
TEN**

40 BY 4 WITHIN TEN

Forty kilometres of shared trails accessible within ten minutes of cycling of primary hub centres – Thames, Coromandel Town, Whitianga, Whangamatā.

**400 BY 2032AB
[AFTER BIKE]**

Four hundred kilometres of linked, epic recreational backcountry trails between primary hubs and outlying nodes with multi-day adventure riding as the key experience. We link north to south and east to west by bike.

**400
BY
2032AB
[AFTER BIKE]**

**TRAIL
CARE
TEAM**

A MOBILE, REGIONAL, SUSTAINABLE TRAIL CARE TEAM

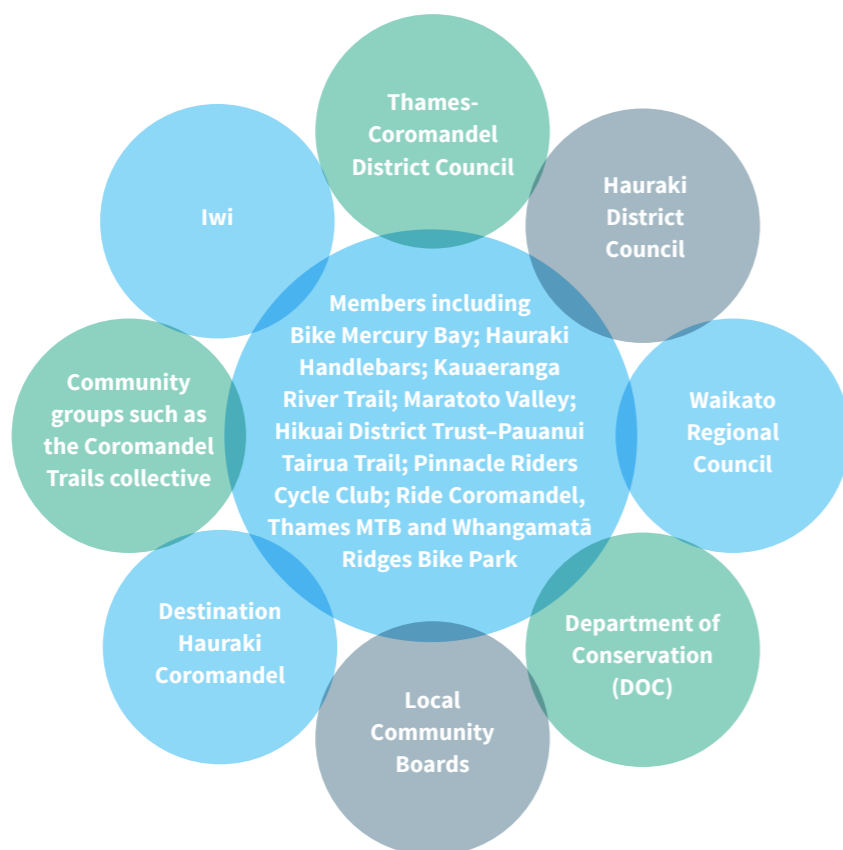
Local capability and capacity delivering innovative high-quality products.

PRINCIPLES

Successful regional outcomes are reliant on all stakeholders being in the same waka, paddling in the same direction and overcoming the big waves together as the storms blow through. For us to create The Coromandel as a nationally significant cycling destination, not everyone will be paddling their waka at the same speed. However, having the same end destination will enable teams to paddle efficiently and land without tipping out or getting waylaid by circular tide patterns.

KEY PARTNERS

Stakeholders who will need to be involved.



STATE OF PLAY

In order to fulfil our outcomes and achieve our vision of becoming a regionally significant mountain biking destination, it is important to look at our past and present to fully understand our strengths, weaknesses and opportunities

OUTCOMES	Past	Present	Future
PEOPLE: Individual and personal relationships	disconnected / competitive	under-resourced; connected to some relationships and environment	connection between human and environment; collaborative relationships; adequately resourced
Social & Cultural (organisational, community and cultural)	disjointed; competitive within sector; cultural misalignment	collaboration has begun	culturally significant areas; maintained regional capability; regional identity; cultural competency
PLACE: Physical Environment (spaces and places, infrastructure)	disjointed; under-resourced	awareness improving but under-resourced	enhanced social interaction and value through purpose-designed facility and infrastructure
PATHWAY: Policy (advocacy, regionally, national sector integrity)	non-engaged	engaging; needing representation; lacking data; lacking regional strategy	regional implementation to ensure advocacy; data insight to inform regional and national decision making; ability to develop fit-for-purpose initiatives

A holistic view to create a nationally significant mountain bike destination

By considering and developing a regional approach across the Hauraki Coromandel cycle experience, trail care and development become sustainable, higher quality and allows for alternative active transport opportunities. Our existing hub towns already have strong existing services particularly for food, beverage and accommodation services.

The design and future development of connecting trail networks from these primary hub towns to other supporting secondary node towns encourage associated economic growth to those secondary node towns, reduces the infrastructure burden within the primary towns and spreads the economic load to the smaller rural areas, creating economic development opportunities between those links.

By facilitating a ride-in, ride-out access (within ten minutes cycle from the centre) for hub towns and utilising smart planning of existing trails, these shared pathways will allow a multitude of rider experiences and create recreational refuges close to urban hubs and peak holiday destinations.

Geographically, the region's forestry partners are crucial to the success of these recreational areas.

Currently, there are minimal safe cycle or active transport alternatives throughout the region. Not having options for people to get where they want to get safely, increases carbon emissions, raises the risk of likely incidents and creates barriers towards physical activity.

When concepting connecting trails and associated links between towns, we envisage that existing trail network utilisation will be considered. Access over these areas is largely within currently constrained DOC-managed Areas or Operational Forestry access. Land tenure ship needs to be carefully considered and consultation with landowners both currently and in the future will be a key measure of success within the development of the concept trail plan and long-term trail viability.



Five days in
The Coromandel
with your bike is
full of more than
most will adventure
in a lifetime.

What does a nationally-significant mountain bike destination look like?

Generally, the following key characteristics are desired within a recognised nationally-significant destination:

- 80+km trail volume
- Trails catering for grade 1 (easy/ green) to grade 6 (extreme / double black diamond)
- Capacity to host national and/or world-level events
- High-quality, comprehensive trail signage system
- A high-quality entry gateway (quality signage, pump track etc.)
- 300m+ elevation opportunity
- Uplift / shuttle opportunity
- High-quality natural environments with unique topographic features
- Local bike store/s supporting the rider with support/whānau persons
- Integrated charging stations at camp grounds and key points of multi day rides
- An iconic / hero riding experience to attract visitors, celebrate and showcase the area
- A minimum of two market-appropriate food outlets within a ten minute drive from trails.
- Market-appropriate accommodation meeting demands during peak season
- A funded, formal trail maintenance program with specific, trained human resources
- Sustainable environmental management practices and social good initiatives.

The Hauraki Coromandel Region has the potential to **become a region that is a nationally-significant destination**, but does not currently have the capacity to host this at any one single town. The key hub towns are home to all uniquely different rider experiences and bike personas. As a region, we offer more than most other regions but have not had a regional approach to the destination from an off-road cycling perspective.

The region offers so much more than just a bike-ride visit, world class beaches, amazing diving, culture, biodiversity, food and fishing – it offers the opportunity to connect to the heart and soul through multiple recreational avenues.

Five days in The Coromandel with your bike is full of more than most will adventure in a lifetime.

CURRENT STATE

A brief description of the current off-road cycle experience in The Coromandel.



WHANGAMATĀ

Known as the region's central area for surf culture, Whangamatā is now undergoing a transformation to a bike and surf destination. With high visitor population and close proximity to key towns such as Tauranga, Hamilton and Auckland, Whangamatā is only a short distance to most for a unique activity experience.

The Whangamatā Ridges Bike Park has focused on becoming a gravity park with a structured trail centre and over 25 km of trails that lend themselves well to enduro format events. The area has a strong youth mountain bike development programme and school relationship as well as the desire to create pathways for international athletes in the future.

The club ensures increased participation for those with limited access to cycling and this will grow in the future as resources allow. The park has the ability to be linked via back-country off-road trails

and private land to the western side of the peninsula.

Since the club has invested in a higher level of safety and the re-generation of existing trails, the area has become well recognised within the national MTB network.

Currently in an area of an operational forest, no long-term Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is in place as this will return to Iwi settlement within 30 years.

There is currently no safe cycleway access from town and the park borders the state highway. A high-end bike store was opened in 2022.

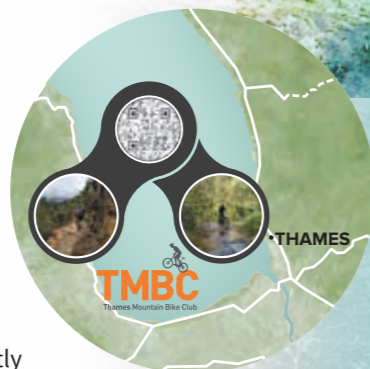


THAMES

Back-country trails are predominantly cross-country intermediate technical grades with adventure trails set in two grassroots trail centres:

- Moanataiari which is close to Thames town and
- Horitori in the popular Kauaeranga Valley

The Thames MTB club is currently initiating a 20km backcountry trail and working with DOC and TCDC. The trail location and geography is suited to e-bike day rides and as the starting point for links through to other back country experiences within the region. The club has small memberships, but highly motivated members delivering bike skill sessions in local schools and DOC summer programmes, despite limited funding resources.



Links to the Hauraki Rail Tail and access through a variety of extended trails are possible, but via DOC land, and these would become back-country experiences. There are excellent linkages to the rest of the region's iconic experiences with well-connected town infrastructure close to large populations of other regional towns.



COROMANDEL TOWN

Ride Coromandel has developed a family-friendly mountain bike park with international standard pump track, flow and progression trails. Beginners through experienced riders can experience these trails with no membership fee. There is no formal club and a small volunteer base. The park was opened in 2021 by the Spirit of Coromandel Trust with the support of the community and many years of campaigning and fund raising through cycle and off road events.

The Ride Coromandel Bike Park was built on an existing refuse site closed in 1995, under an memorandum of understanding agreement with TCDC. The cross-country trails have been constructed via Heritage NZ authorisation and DOC in conjunction with Te Patukirikiri Iwi, using Iwi land. It has developed good Iwi relations throughout the build, and has a strong conservation and community focus. The kauri forest is adjacent to the park planted by the Trust over 20 years ago. The park has created and installed the first kauri dieback bike-specific wash station with the view to protecting the kauri. The Ride Coromandel park was the 2022 Sport Waikato Outstanding Space Active Recreation Award Winner and continues to develop as resources allow.



Ferry access from Auckland (a seasonal service using Hannaford Wharf) allows further bike-in access to Coromandel Town. There is a largely untapped diverse trail network via predator control trails and existing shared trails that have not been formally managed or linked. The town is the gateway to an 80 – 100km gravel loop with 80 per cent of the ride along scenic coastlines.

Underdeveloped shared trail potential surrounds the area with longer back-country trails linking to the northern region and potentially across to other hub towns via Forestry-owned land.





WHITIANGA

The Mercury Bay Cycling Strategy was adopted in 2019 to improve infrastructure to ensure cycling is a viable and safe transport choice, to support cycling as a quality recreation option and to facilitate the development of cycling experiences that stimulate economic growth. This is currently being undertaken.

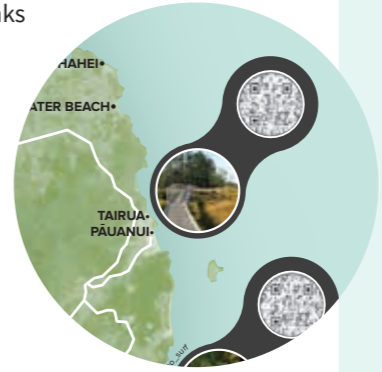
However, the off-road family bike park created on the edge of town has limited potential to expand due to surrounding land issues: it is adjacent to the operational Summit forest with limited access for recreational purposes. There are also Waikato regional biodiversity concerns within close proximity to the park on land that has previously been proposed as an alternative recreation area.

Alternative options for active recreation within a ten minute ride of Whitianga need to be addressed, as this is a key hub town that does not have appropriate cycling spaces appointed and is bounded by forestry as the only alternate recreational space which will experience non sanctioned access without appropriate engagement.



PĀUANUI AND TAIRUA

A scenic trail is being built along the banks of the Tairua river linking Pāuanui and Tairua. It has strong visitor numbers in summer months and is well used by walkers and bikers. Currently in stage 3 of the stage 4 construction phase, the vision is to connect eastern townships via a 25km cycleway. The areas are surrounded by forest and are popular for watersports. Tairua has recently added its own bike store.



NORTHERN COROMANDEL (NODE OF COROMANDEL)

Authentic, epic back-country shared trails connected by DOC campgrounds and stunning coastlines with the opportunities to fish, dive, camp, surf and ride 120km of gravel trails pretty much sums up the Northern Coromandel.

The area is a seasonal mecca for long-format bike packing and gravel riding, however it has limited safe access during high summer months due to the nature of the narrow roads, and high amount of vehicle use. The limited off road trails are suited to intermediate adventure seeking riders. This area is enhanced by well-managed DOC campgrounds and has the potential to become a gravel rider's heaven as there are opportunities to connect private

landowner trails to further enhance the experience and create multiple back-country adventures.

Colville is a smaller rural town with limited infrastructure and potential for small business growth, and the extension of the summer season would well support this region.

Private landowners are supportive of trail development on their own land, within pockets.



WAIHI – PAEROA

This area is closely connected to the most popular section of the Hauraki Rail Trail. It is rich in DOC campgrounds and heritage experiences, cafes, events and infrastructure, with access to Tauranga, Rotorua and Hamilton. Local trails access historic experiences and have the ability to link into lower Thames and Whangamatā, making a multi day loop easily accessible from Auckland and Tauranga.



Photograph credit: Chris Parker

OTHER AREAS

There are other smaller, linking trails and privately-owned, off-road ventures that are in various stages of progress not specifically detailed, but these should be considered as key linking and feeder trails to wider connection and access.



TO SUPPORT THIS STRATEGY COUNCIL CAN SUPPORT IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:



The approach has been to collect feedback from community stakeholders and develop an aligned approach to the next steps. Council can support this initiative by the following:

- Support the creation of a **Regional Local Trail Entity (RLTE)**.
- Develop a Business Case to request co-investment from Central Government for the implementation of the Regional Local Trail Entity and trail development.
- Allocate adequate resources to enable efficiently liaison with trail groups effectively.
- **Develop a Thames-Coromandel District Active Transport Network Plan.**
(aligned with the National Cycling Plan and Emissions reduction plan to improve cycling infrastructure across the region).
- This plan enables cycling and walking within urban centres in the districts, advocate for future shared pathways as mandatory connection and commuting to urban areas in town and regional planning.
- Support **mountain biking as a core experience delivered by the regional hub towns** in Hauraki-Coromandel (Thames, Whitianga, Coromandel and Whangamatā).

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

A. IDENTIFY AN ADVOCATE OR ORGANISATION

Identify an advocate or organisation / governance group to pursue the formation of the regional trail collective alliance group. Confirm the key outcomes and associated actions.

- ii. State the recommendations and prioritisation projects for the next 10 years.

B. SECURE FUNDING TO ESTABLISH A BUSINESS PLAN

Secure funding to establish a business plan as follows:

- i. Initiate discussions with possible partners, iwi, funders and collaborators.
- ii. Establish the geographic scope of the alliance.
- iii. Confirm what, if any, existing organisation an alliance should sit within, or if an independent/external model is preferred.
- iv. Create a draft set of guidelines and MOU to be adopted by members once formed.
- v. Establish budget and identify long-term funding opportunities for the collective.

C. CREATE A WORK PROGRAMME

Create a work programme with adequate resources to develop the following key actions:

- Create a business case and resource maintenance allocation for the long-term support of identified Hub Towns 40km within ten-minute trail networks.
- Develop the trail hub towns event infrastructure to enable world-class event and revenue streams. Support cycling events via regional hubs.
- Create and implement regional trail care capability and capacity with accessible recruitment, training and innovation development via supported pathways, apprenticeships and curriculum development.
- Develop priority trail-head facilities (this may include parking, signage, activity specific facilities and/or toilets, charging stations and access) as identified within the Concept Trail Development and Management Plan.
- Ensure the implementation of existing completed feasibility plans for regional trails are co-ordinated toward a regional outcome. These should facilitate the mechanisms for supporting the requirements for trail planning, development, management and ongoing maintenance.



HAURAKI-COROMANDEL

DRAFT BIKING STRATEGY COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT OF FEEDBACK SEPTEMBER 2023



Goals



Share the draft Strategy with local communities and gain feedback on its goals and outcomes.



Gain insight to the needs of the cycling community and local demand for trails.



To inform our Council's next steps for the draft Strategy.

- Overall, the majority of feedback was positive and constructive, showing **substantial community support for, and interest in, the draft Hauraki-Coromandel biking strategy.**
- The successful implementation of the Strategy will require **collaboration, efficient governance, community engagement and strategic planning.**

Results

89%

support the overall vision of the strategy

564

responses were recorded, showing strong interest from the community

65%

of non-cycling locals supported the vision

Insights

53% were **more likely to visit new places** within the region if trails were developed.

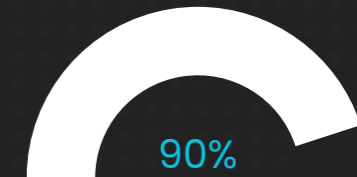
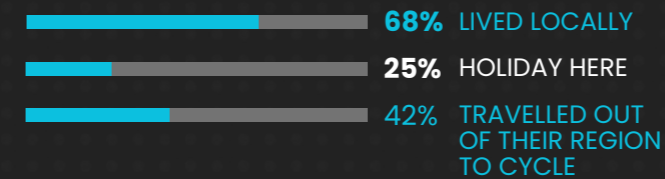
88% SUPPORTED THE STRATEGY'S WELLBEING GOALS.

HAURAKI-COROMANDEL

DRAFT BIKING STRATEGY COMMUNITY SURVEY SNAPSHOT OF FEEDBACK SEPTEMBER 2023



Location of respondents



felt it is **IMPORTANT** to develop the trail network

Top themes

1. Strong support and demand for biking infrastructure and economic growth.
2. Inclusive design required, to include riders of all abilities.
3. Creating connections between communities is key to share benefits.
4. Riders need safe access to pathways and trails.
5. New developments should respect existing trails and other trail users.

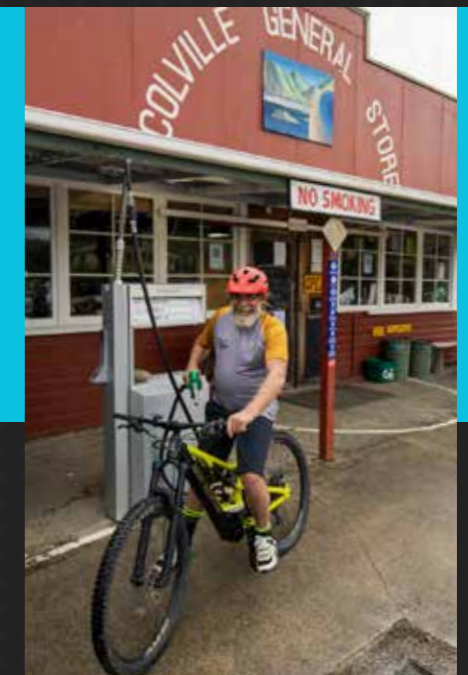


HOW COULD TRAIL DEVELOPMENT BE FUNDED?

Respondents believed in utilising a combination of funding sources including:

- Council support and seed funding
- Government grants
- Philanthropy
- Private sector involvement
- Corporate sponsorship

They emphasised not over-burdening taxpayers or local rates and encouraging a mix of financing methods to ensure the creation of high-quality trails.





STRATEGIC GAME PLAN INITIATIVE

Strategic Game Plan Initiative	Recommended Actions	Priority
Clear Leadership, Policy and Governance Structure	Develop and support a regional trail management governance team. Appoint local government trail officers or designated staff members (e.g. recreation planner or community development officer) to liaise with the trail management bodies regarding the development, promotion and management of trails in the Council / DOC areas representing all stakeholders	High
People	Prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) / agreement for each trail as required over the next ten years for relevant trails / recreation areas without a formal policy	High
People	Allocate adequate resources to the various governance levels, to ensure required tasks can be carried out in a timely and appropriate manner	High
People	Support further development of the cycling network, particularly within urban settings, by extending and improving cycling routes, providing links to public transport interchanges and establishing bicycle lanes along arterial roads via the regional council urban cycling strategy	Medium
People	Consult with the local community and key user groups (e.g. through clubs and/or peak bodies) in the planning stage of regional trail development and/or upgrade projects and prioritisation	High
People	Adopt relevant 'code of conduct' and develop local information about appropriate use for each regional trail in order to ensure consistent user experience & optimal engagement	Medium
People	Uphold the Mana of Pare Hauraki whānau, hapū and Iwi through respect of the tino rangatiratanga (living according to tikanga, ensuring that resources are sustained for future generations, the all encompassing well-being of hapū and resources)	High
People	Iwi engagement is collaborative following the principles outlined: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kanohi ki te kanohi (Face to Face) - Rangatira ki te rangatira (Chief to chief) - Nā te kakano (From the seed) - Tuwhera, me te whai kiko (Open, meaningful) - Ki tai wiwi, ki taiwawa (Flexibility) - Tikanga Māori (Protocol) - Ko te tūmanako (Transparent) - Mahia te whare (Foster capacity) - Whakatika te he (Accountability) - Kia tika te reo (Appropriate language) 	High
People	Further develop and implement joint regional trail policy, procedure and guidelines, including standardised approaches to public liability, volunteer and stakeholder engagement, environmental impact assessment, sustainability plans, emergency/risk management, best practice trail construction and design techniques and classification. Create a centralised resource of infrastructure and knowledge for regional use	Medium

Strategic Game Plan Initiative	Recommended Actions	Priority
People	Increase the stewardship and value of trail network to local population. Remove the barriers to entry for women, girls and youth to actively recreate. Upskill, recruit and reward volunteers using innovation, streamlined processes and reconnecting people to the ngahere and community.	Medium
	Remove the barriers to entry for women, girls and youth to actively recreate and is participant focused and accessible to all	Low
People	Enable a youth development pathway for mountain biking, free riding, cycling and trail stewardship to enable well-being outcomes to be generated for young people in and through sport. Ensuring principals that support quality experiences regardless of ability or motivation, be safe, fair and inclusive. Encourage bold and courageous leadership and a collaborative, collective attitude. Encourage skill development regardless of ability. Encourage variety and offer talent identification pathways when appropriate.	Medium
Pathway	Create a regionally supported coaching mountain bike development programme to support skill and talent identification and development through Waikato sanctioned school events, summer programmes and Rangatahi and Wahine on Wheels collective experiences. These are to be aligned with Sport New Zealand 'Balance is Better' philosophy.	Medium
Improved Co-ordination of Trail Planning, Development and Management	Prepare and implement a Joint Trail Development and Management Plan (to become the working Master Trail Plan) for each region, ensuring the key values of Environment, Biodiversity and Culture are considered. Ensuring alignment with Iwi Principles, Destination Management Objectives, partnership with DOC and local Councils while embracing community engagement.	High
Pathway	Form and adopt the Trails Master Plan as the over-arching guide to the planning, development and management of regional trails over the next ten years	High
Pathway	Adopt the design and development standards herein as a reference guide, in conjunction with other best-practice guidelines including the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) guidelines for trail construction and relevant NZMTB Standards for shared trails	Medium
Pathway	Undertake regular data collection using track monitors, surveys or user interviews regarding use of regional trails and other visitation data. The basic purpose is to determine user numbers. Resources permitting, the information should then seek details of origin of user, activity undertaken, frequency of use, experience being sought, length of stay, average spend and satisfaction level of experience	Medium
Pathway	Enable a centrally-managed regional membership experience that creates a sustainable revenue stream and communication platform	Medium

Strategic Game Plan Initiative	Recommended Actions	Priority
Pathway	Facilitate the sharing of knowledge relating to trail planning, construction and management between all land management agencies, local government authorities, key user groups and organisations within the region	Medium
Pathway	Facilitate the sharing of knowledge relating to trail planning, construction and management between all land management agencies, local government authorities, key user groups and other relevant organisations nationally	Long
Pathway	Complete regional trail evaluation tool	Medium
Pathway	Create and build a collaborated regional prioritisation matrix to guide investment and project prioritisation	High
Pathway	Create a mobile regional trail development team with dedicated human resource, shared capital resource and innovative skill development	High
		Medium
Pathway	Create and implement capability and capacity within the region with accessible recruitment, training and innovation development via supported pathways, apprenticeships and curriculum development – Programme of Trail Building Excellence (POTBE)	High
Experience-led Trail Development	Explore the feasibility of completing identified Hub Towns 40km within ten-minute trail networks	High
Place	Explore the potential and feasibility of completing 400km back-country hero trail experience. The Coromandel Journey of Cycle – Haerenga Pahikara	High – Medium
Place	Facilitate the managed recreation of forestry reserves and ensure the provision of adequate access for the future consistent with policy and appropriate authorisation	Medium
Place	Develop priority trail-head facilities (this may include parking, signage, activity specific facilities and/or toilets, charging stations and access) as identified within the Trail Development and Management Plan	Medium
Place	Prepare and implement Thematic Interpretation Strategies for each regional trail to provide guidance for the creation of unique and memorable visitor experiences; to provide a point of difference (uniquely Coromandel); to help raise the profile of the regional trails and to celebrate our culture and creativity.	Medium – Low
Place	Collaborate with land owners to monitor ongoing impacts of individual trails; to improve management practices over the long-term; to improve new construction techniques and materials, with particular attention to sustainability. Create innovative trail-building systems unique to the specific nature of our geology and environmental conditions.	Low
Place	Advocate for future shared pathways as a mandatory connection and for commuting to urban areas in future town and regional planning	Medium

Strategic Game Plan Initiative	Recommended Actions	Priority
Place	Support the further development and promotion of mountain biking as a core experience delivered by the regional hub towns in Hauraki Coromandel	High – Medium
Place	Ensure that further development of the existing hubs is of a high standard and provides a diversity of riding experiences and associated infrastructure (based on the IMBA trail construction and classification guidelines), and is suitable for all levels of competition and riders	Medium
Place	Investigate the potential to better integrate the MTB hubs, reinforce their combined regional role, while ensuring that each offers unique experiences	Medium
Place	Expand the opportunities for people with mobility impairments to use regional trails and hub trail parks by enabling adaptive mountain-bike trail development	Medium – Low
Place	Develop the trail hub towns event infrastructure to enable world-class event and revenue streams. Support cycling events via regional hubs.	Low
Effective and Co-ordinated Marketing and Promotion	Prepare and implement a regional trail marketing and promotion plan (the marketing and promotion plan should align with regional brand and thematic interpretation and Destination Hauraki Coromandel management plans and principles)	Medium
Place	Investigate a trails digital platform for the Hauraki-Coromandel region. The website could include downloadable maps and trail notes, with links to services, tours, packages etc, with the capacity to become the resource platform for shared knowledge and the central digital space for all cycling experiences.	Medium – Low
Place	Develop a suite of quality images / digital content of the regional Hub town trails that can be used to promote the experiences on offer and, in particular, the point of difference with other trails within the North Island	High
People / Place	Create an ambassador programme aligned with individual advocates, partners and funders	Medium
Increased Funding and Resources	Ensure the implementation of existing completed feasibility plans for regional trails are co-ordinated toward a regional outcome. These should facilitate the mechanisms for supporting the requirements for trail planning, development, management and ongoing maintenance.	High
Pathway	Seek opportunities for joint resource and funding commitment from partners / stakeholders / other revenue streams	High, Ongoing
Pathway	Consider the mechanism of entity to enable improved access to national and regional government grants	Medium
Pathway	Assess the opportunities to generate a revenue stream from users of the regional trails consistent with relevant policies and management plans.	Medium

Strategic Game Plan Initiative	Recommended Actions	Priority
Pathway	Maintain the audit of potential regional trails for future reference, and as a planning tool (GIS information may also be useful to collect regarding routes). Ensure existing trails are compliant to standards and maintain where needed.	Ongoing
Pathway	Prioritise improving the recruitment, training, and management of the regional trail care team and volunteers associated with trail planning, development and maintenance across the region.	High, Ongoing
Place	Biodiversity hygiene control measures to ensure safe trail usage. Ensure terrestrial pest management systems are implemented and controlled (such as Kauri dieback)	High, Ongoing
Place	Progress the commitment to the Hauraki Coromandel sustainability plan: Carbon Free, Waste Free, Predator Free initiatives	High, Ongoing

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UNLIMITED POTENTIAL

The Hauraki-Coromandel region has unlimited potential as an international cycling destination, limited only by what is desired for our future generations. This framework has been compiled with the input and help of many who are grateful to call this place our home. It is with this in mind that we would like to see the region developed sustainably, thoughtfully and with respect.

It is imperative that key stakeholders are aligned, work collaboratively, transparently and with a long-term, generational vision. But this does not mean we can sit back and wait for things to happen by themselves. Many volunteer hours have realised what has been created already in the region and it is our opportunity to stand up, pedal forward and create a cycle journey worthy of those before us.



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Credits: Photography: @graememurray.com